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into another world. We may think of God as "the guiding spirit of social progress, the leader in the work of human betterment, who strives and suffers with us in the cause of universal evolution" (p. 281). Another fundamental belief is the affirmation of the eternal worth of the human person, involving, of course, immortality, but also involving the conviction that the religion of human progress is a worthy end. Thus the belief in immortality is not a doctrine of reward in another life for deeds done here, but is rather the conception of an unlimited opportunity of personal development transcending the obstacles and disappointments of earthly life.

The book is a welcome addition to the growing literature which sets forth the religious aspects of our modern life, with its mastery of nature and its growing belief that the world as we know it need not be accepted just as it stands, but may be transformed through the co-operation of spiritually minded men. It is one of the merits of Professor Wright's discussion that while he recognizes in this aspiration of our age a kind of religion very different from the supernaturalism which found expression in the mediaeval creeds and liturgies, he at the same time interprets it as a phase of the evolution of religion. Doubtless there is already a widespread attitude of welcome for precisely this type of religion. But there is as yet a deplorably meager provision for the social cultivation of a strong sense of the vitality of this kind of faith. It is to be hoped that Professor Wright's book will be widely read; for it is well calculated to arouse interest and sympathy for a religious movement of great promise.

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#### DISCUSSIONS OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS<sup>1</sup>

*The Christian Life in the Modern World* is the subject of the McNair lectures given by Professor F. G. Peabody at the University of North Carolina. The author recognizes that the burning questions for the Christian thinker of the present are not those of criticism nor of Christian theology, but those of Christian ethics. It is charged by many that "all that can be substituted for an incredible theology is an impossible ethics." The reply made to this is that Christianity asks "the acceptance, not of a teaching, but of a teacher," and that it must be "recognized as a progressive historic movement, still in the making." In a discussion of the family the socialistic idea that the family is to be

<sup>1</sup> *The Christian Life in the Modern World*. By Francis G. Peabody. New York: Macmillan, 1914. 234 pages. \$1.25.

merged into the larger unity of the state is repudiated, the importance of eugenics is acknowledged, the method of the rich in sending children to boarding-school is characterized as "a principle of deportation," and the true philosophy of the family is found in Jesus' teaching of the indissolubleness of the marriage tie.

Taking up the subject of business and industry the author assumes "that humanity is to remain for the present as it is," and urges that "the only practical problem, therefore, is to apply the principle of competition to beneficent ends." This is in contrast to unethicized capitalism on the one hand, and socialism on the other. "The wage system in its bare economic form must be supplemented, if it is not to be supplanted"; but this leads to profit-sharing, industrial partnership, and the like, through the infusing of "fraternalism" into our competitive system. A lecture is devoted to the ethics of spending and of giving. The conception of the state as an instrument of conquest is contrasted with the conception of it as a moral organism, an agent of idealism. The plan for a "World Conference on Faith and Order" is characterized, in the light of the conditions of unity proposed, as being based upon a dogmatic, confessional, intellectualized view of discipleship. What is needed is "a simplified, socialized, and spiritualized church," which is "but another name for the Christian life organized to serve the modern world."

The lectures take account of the most recent literature on the subjects dealt with, they are written with the author's well-known felicity of expression and mastery of antithesis, and they bring out his point of view skilfully under broad, simple, and suggestive conceptions. They can hardly be said, however, to make a contribution additional to that already made in Professor Peabody's widely read and brilliant books on Christian ethics; and there are several questions, which lie close to the themes taken up, that receive but slight treatment, or none at all—such, for example, as the bearing of industrialism and feminism on the family; the reciprocal relation between the individual Christian life and a progressive reconstruction of social institutions; internationalism; and church federation.

A convenient manual, "intended primarily for the use of study-circles, young people's classes and inquirers generally," is *The Christian Life*,<sup>1</sup> by Rev. R. H. Coats. It is divided into sections which adapt it for daily reading and weekly discussions for an eight weeks' course.

<sup>1</sup> *The Christian Life*. By R. H. Coats. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark. 164 pages. 6d.

Such studies, prepared by competent men and published in inexpensive form, as is true in this instance, are greatly needed, and the teaching of this little volume is judicious and admirable, but the material, the vocabulary, and the arrangement are hardly popular enough for the purpose in view.

*Christian Freedom* is the title of the Baird lecture for 1913,<sup>1</sup> delivered by William M. MacGregor, pastor of Saint Andrew's United Free Church, Edinburgh. The lectures were addressed to popular audiences in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Their topic is "the priesthood of all believers." The author has developed his thought by means of a free exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians; at the same time he has drawn liberally on all the Pauline epistles and on the life of Paul. Pertinent though the Epistle to the Galatians is to the author's subject, the reader is likely to feel that the blending of exposition and systematic discussion has interfered with the value of the result. But the book is enriched by many allusions to recent critical and theological writings, as well as to general literature, and many stimulating passages as to the meaning of Christian freedom are given.

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### THE THEORY OF ABSTRACT ETHICS

In a small but thoughtful book<sup>2</sup> the author has condensed the results of many years of philosophical and ethical reflection and, at the same time, given his own new solution of a problem by which, until recently, he had been somewhat baffled. This result he reached in consequence of his perusal of a review of Juvalta's *Old and New Problem of Morality* written by Mr. Benn in *Mind*, January, 1915. Not a little of the thought, too, seems to have been evoked by the present European conflict. At any rate, the author's conclusions afford a basis for the British contention that individual states should be allowed to develop in accordance with their own inherent tendencies rather than that they should be directed by some more or less benevolent despot.

In the opening chapter, Mr. Whittaker presents his own metaphysical position, especially his epistemology, which is idealistic, modified in the direction of philosophical rationalism. He indicates his approval of

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Freedom*. By William M. MacGregor. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914. xii+427 pages. \$1.50.

<sup>2</sup> *The Theory of Abstract Ethics*. By Thomas Whittaker. Cambridge: University Press, 1916. viii+126 pages. 4s.6d.